**Railway Freight Traffic**

503. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how much was the Railway freight trafic, in terms of revenue, during April—September, 1998 in comparison to the same period during 1997;

(b) what was the loss of freight revenue during this period, in comparison to earlier years during the same period; and

(c) how Government plan to increase the freight revenue in the coming months?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Railway freight traffic in terms of revenue is as under:

(Rs. in crore)

| April—September '98 | April—September '97 |
|---|---|
| 9735.57 | 9458.81 |

(b) Actual Freight Earnings for the five year period from 1994-95 to 1998-99 (April to September) are as under:—

(Rs. in crore)

| Year (April—September) | Earnings |
|---|---|
| 1998-99 | 9735.57 |
| 1997-98 | 9548.81 |
| 1996-97 | 7835.71 |
| 1995-96 | 7346.77 |
| 1994-95 | 6453.27 |

(c) Railway freight traffic is a derived demand arising out of the requirements of different core sectors of the economy. As a number of steps taken by the Government, demand for rail traffic by different sectors have shown improvement. Besides this, aggressive marketing strategies have been adopted by Railways to give support to rail traffic demand to increase the quantom of rail freight traffic and thereby the freight revenue.

**Catering and other services in Trains**

504. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the plan of Government to improve catering and other services on board the trains;